

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for controlling a vehicle, comprising the steps of:
determining an actual speed of the vehicle;
predefining a setpoint speed;
detecting whether the vehicle is traveling on a descent;
calculating at least one manipulated variable based on the actual speed and the setpoint speed only when the vehicle is detected as traveling on the descent; and
influencing the actual speed of the vehicle on the basis of the at least one manipulated variable.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein:

the at least one manipulated variable is calculated only when one of a switch and a button is activated.

3. The method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of:

applying a brake pressure to at least one wheel brake based on a difference between the actual speed and the setpoint speed such that the actual speed is brought in line with the setpoint speed; the step of applying being performed according to one of a condition when the actual speed exceeds the setpoint speed and, if the actual speed is lower than the setpoint speed, a condition when the actual speed is approaching the setpoint speed.

4. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

causing a tilt sensor to supply a signal, wherein the step of detecting whether the vehicle is traveling on the descent includes the step of evaluating the signal supplied by the tilt sensor.

5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

determining an actual acceleration of the vehicle; and

calculating a model acceleration based on a driving torque, wherein:

the step of detecting whether the vehicle is traveling on the descent includes

Sub 1
Concluded

~~the step of detecting the descent only if a rate of change of the actual acceleration is positive and a difference between the actual acceleration and the model acceleration is also positive.~~

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein:

the step of detecting whether the vehicle is traveling on the descent includes the step of detecting the descent only if the positive rate of change of the actual acceleration is due to a self-acceleration of the vehicle associated with traveling downhill.

7. The method according to claim 5, further comprising the step of:

in an absence of a signal combination, detecting the descent if a brake pressure is applied by a manipulated variable.

Sub C1

8. A device for controlling a vehicle, comprising:

a control device for receiving a signal indicating an actual speed of the vehicle;
a memory in which a setpoint speed is predefined; and
an output arrangement via which a manipulated variable that influences the actual speed of the vehicle is output based on the actual speed and the setpoint speed in order to influence the actual speed of the vehicle, wherein:

the control device includes an enabling arrangement for enabling only the manipulated variable to be calculated and output, respectively, if a descent of the vehicle has been detected.

Sub D2

9. The device according to claim 8, wherein:

the control device determines a signal representing an actual acceleration of the vehicle,

the control device includes a model for calculating a model acceleration based on a driving torque, and

the control device includes an arrangement for detecting the descent of the vehicle, the descent of the vehicle only being detected if a rate of change of the actual acceleration and a difference between the actual acceleration and the model acceleration are positive.

add p1